

Prior law, relative to wildlife agents, authorized "commissioned employees" of the department to carry concealed or exposed weapons in the performance of their duties. New law authorizes "wildlife enforcement agents of the enforcement division" to carry concealed or exposed weapons in the performance of their duties.

Prior law authorized the secretary of DWF, the assistant secretary for the office of forestry, employees of the office of forestry, commissioned wildlife agents and commissioned wildlife employees of divisions other than the enforcement division, and local law enforcement officers to arrest any person violating the laws under the jurisdiction of the department. New law deletes authority for officers and employees of the office of forestry and commissioned wildlife employees from divisions other than the enforcement division to make arrests and adds the deputy secretary of the department to those with power to arrest. New law also provides that arrests may be made for violations of law or regulations under the jurisdiction of the department or any other law of the state.

Prior law authorized the secretary of DWF or any commissioned wildlife agent to visit and inspect, with or without a search warrant, any place where wildlife or fish can be deposited whenever there is probable cause to believe a violation has occurred. New law limits that authorization to the secretary, the deputy secretary, and commissioned wildlife enforcement agents. Prior law authorized commissioned wildlife agents to make certain inspections. New law authorizes commissioned wildlife enforcement agents of the enforcement division to make these inspections.

Prior law vested trained, commissioned wildlife agents with the same powers conferred on other law enforcement officers of the state. New law specifies that these regular police enforcement powers shall be conferred only upon commissioned wildlife enforcement agents of the enforcement division.

Prior law vested those trained, commissioned wildlife officers with the same powers conferred on other law enforcement officers relative to criminal offenses such as arson, litter, theft, or burglary when those crimes are observed while in the performance of their normal duties. Also provides that while on special assignment during riot, insurrection, or natural disaster, wildlife agents have the same powers as regular law enforcement officers of the state. New law deletes these provisions.

Effective August 15, 1999.

(Amends R.S. 56:53, 54, 55, and 55.2)